



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 1 August 2017

by **Paul Jackson B Arch (Hons) RIBA**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 8 August 2017

Appeal A: APP/J3530/W/17/3169613

Appeal B: APP/J3530/Y/17/3169589

Sparrow Cottage, Chapel Street, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4NF

- The appeals are made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission and under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeals are made by Mr & Mrs Sheila and Fergus Miller & Faulds against the decisions of Suffolk Coastal District Council.
 - The applications Ref DC/16/4775/FUL and DC/16/4776/LBC, dated 10 November 2016, were refused by notices dated 28 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing single storey extension and ground floor rear wall and erection of a larger single storey extension.
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Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are as follows:

Appeal A

- Whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Woodbridge Conservation Area.

Appeal B

- The effect of the proposed extension on the architectural character and historic interest of 6 Market Hill, which is listed at Grade II.

Reasons

3. The listed building is a late 17th century 3 storey timber framed building facing Market Hill. The appeal property, now known as Sparrow Cottage, is a 19th century 2 storey building at the rear, erected for ancillary storage historically associated with the commercial use of No. 6. A physical link remains to No. 6 (only in terms of built fabric) and a passageway from Chapel Street provides access. The appeal property is listed by virtue of lying within the curtilage of No. 6. Though altered, the appeal building retains architectural and historical interest by virtue of the original shared use.
 4. The character of the area south of Chapel Street stems largely from the gradually evolving use of the narrow plots behind the buildings in Market Hill for associated residential and commercial purposes. A range of buildings and extensions with intervening walls, yards and small gardens provide an intimate
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feel and much small scale architectural and historical interest. Building materials generally reflect those available locally including bricks, timber and clay tiles (slates were imported from Wales in the middle of the 19th century). The heritage significance of the area immediately around the appeal property derives from the traditional materials and building forms which have developed in an intimate and informal plan layout. Any modern elements are generally confined to secondary components such as windows and sensitively incorporated. Where building work has occurred, it respects the local vernacular. The appeal property has been much altered but the building form and materials used are generally sympathetic to the locality.

5. The proposed extension would replace a conventional glazed bay on the north side of the building with a contemporary portal frame structure clad entirely in dark grey finished zinc. The intention is to create additional living space. In terms of the impact on the conservation area, public views would be rather limited, as the building is up a slope behind a high brick wall. However, the acceptability of a proposal does not necessarily relate directly to its visual prominence; that approach would favour poor design that was well screened.
6. The metal and expansive glass elements would not be inspired by any existing nearby architectural fenestration and are intended to contrast. The occupiers of surrounding properties would see the development from surrounding windows. It would be prominent from nearby gardens. The zinc pitched roof and glass would project above the brick wall along the passageway and would replace the whole of the ground floor seen from the north. At ground level, it would dominate the modest scale of the former store. The detailing of the connection between old and new is critical in the success of a scheme of this kind and the pitched roof would cut across the horizontal first floor weatherboarding in a strident and unsympathetic way with a particularly prominent corner where weatherboarding, tiles and zinc would meet uncomfortably: this would compromise the integrity of the existing building. Matching the pitch and dimensions of the existing modest lean-to extension in zinc would appear visually awkward. The extension would completely occupy the whole width of the garden and would fail to respect the proportions of the existing building; this is illustrated by the image at Figure 8 of the Design and Access Statement.
7. The Woodbridge Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document of 2011 recognises that high quality modern design has a role to play but advises that undesirable changes can include inappropriate alterations and extensions which do not respect the scale, form and detailing of existing buildings and the use of modern materials and details in the area. I consider that the intimate historic character of this part of the conservation area is sensitive to change of the scale proposed. The former storage building has been altered, extended and improved as a dwelling house over the years, but it remains a modest building and is subservient to the listed host building at No. 6. The use of modern materials and a modern design can be a useful method of distinguishing new construction from old and can be complimentary or even emphasise heritage interest. It is possible to construct buildings that are recognisably contemporary while understanding and respecting history and context. However in this case the extension would fall between 'fitting in' and 'contrasting new with the old'. It would dominate the northern elevation of the listed curtilage building, significantly diminishing its contribution to the character and grain of the area. It would not relate well to the scale and character of its surroundings and would not preserve or enhance the character

or appearance of the conservation area. It would also harm the architectural character and historic interest of the listed building. There would be a significant conflict with the heritage protection aims of saved policy AP1 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and policies SP15 and DM21 of the 2013 Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.

8. For these reasons the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Jackson

INSPECTOR